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VOL. XII.—No. 3.

NEW YORK, JUNE, 1888.

Per Annum, Four Dollars.
Single Copies, 35 Cents.

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Entered at New York Post Office as Second Class Mail Matter.

The Decorator and Furnisher.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT
30 & 32 East Fourteenth Street, New York, by

THE ART-TRADES PUBLISHING CO.,

J. T. PRATT, President,

To whom all communications should be addressed.

THOMAS A. KENNETT, Editor.

New England Office: 120 Tremont Street, Boston.
Western Office: 195 Wabash Av., Chicago.

Subscription, \$4 per year, in advance.

(PATENT BINDER, \$1.00 EXTRA).

Single Copies - - - 35 Cents.

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OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

THE success of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER Prize Competition has been so complete in some of the classes that we intend to make such a competition a regular feature of the magazine in future. The contest has been much more keen, however, in some departments than in others, especially in Class A and C.

IN class A "for the best article, about 1,500 words, on the arrangement and decoration at moderate cost of the 'best room' in a country house," the first prize is awarded to Mrs. Frances H. Scott, of Woodruff Place, Indianapolis. The article will be published, with illustrations, in our next issue.

The second prize was divided between Miss J. R. Pugh, of Burlington, N. J., and Augusta S. Prescott, 478 Broadway, Albany, N. Y. The third prize was awarded to S. Eugene Sargent, of Eells and Sargent, Bankers, 51 Exchange Place, New York.

In Class B the first prize for a three fold screen, representing birds, fruits and flowers, was awarded to Miss A. M. Hathaway, Brockton, Mass.; the second to R. E. Fischinger, East One Hundred and Third Street, New York, and the third to Elizabeth Robson, 622 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn.

For designs for a salad fork and spoon, Class C, the first prize was awarded to Mr. Alfred F. Osborn, Portchester, N. Y.; the second was divided between Mr. Harold H. Brown, 213 Pleasant Street, Malden, Mass. and Mr. A. B. Bogert, Flatbush, L. I., and the third was awarded to F. Boye, 581 Market Street, San Francisco.

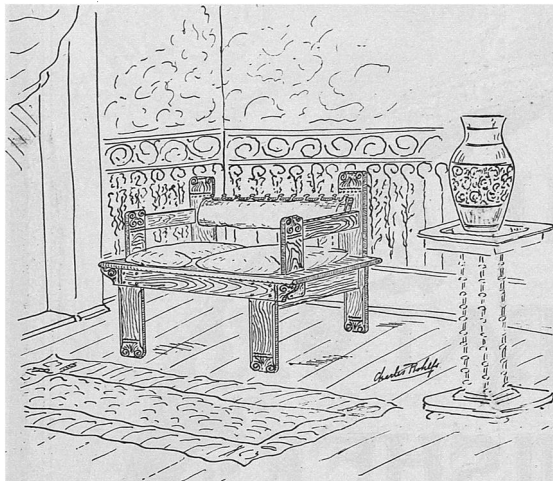
For the mantel lambrequin, Class D, the first prize was awarded to Miss A. M. Hathaway, Boston, Mass.

In Class E, design for set of fruit plates, Miss Sarah Pillsbury, 916 Third Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn., received the first prize, and Mrs. J. N. Scott, of Indianapolis, the second.

A NEW decorative industry has been provided in the making of what is known as wood tapestry, and which is quite within the reach of lady amateurs. The veneers are of real and imitation hardwoods, turned out as thin as shavings; the parts of a design composed of these are glued to paper and then attached to the wall by a paper hanger. The art lies in devising good forms and combinations of colors, for the veneer is so thin that a well tempered penknife fixed in the end of an

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oval wooden handle suffices for the cutting. Designs may readily be found suitable for reproduction of these woods, that if well executed are calculated to give a stately appearance to rooms that otherwise would perhaps go without notable adornment.



A corner in the study of Anne Katherine Green, author of the series of novels began several years ago with "The Leavenworth Case." The coloring of the room is principally old gold. The settee is polished oak, and was designed by Charles Rohlf, of Buffalo. The cushions are of peacock blue plush, those at the back being held up by knobbed pins in the loops. The pieces of the settee are fastened by round head brass screws, no glue being used.

But the art allows of a wider extension, as to the tops of small tables, dados, etc. It may be so carried out as literally to transfigure the appearance of a room or of the furniture.

BOOKBINDING has properly become an important branch of decoration. When books well and handsomely got up and arranged according to color and sizes, occupy in a room the place of honor which they merit, they certainly add to its attractions. Stamped leather, a decorative agent used in the past, has of late years had its capabilities in this line more fully developed, as in the forms of the bindings of illuminated manuscripts of medieval times down to the period of the Renaissance, and in French and Japanese imitations, rendering them worthy of being similarly displayed, not packed in shelves with the backs outward, but with the sides in view. The examples and traditions of those times led in later days to a wealth of decorative beauty being bestowed on their volumes by book lovers such as Grolier. The well considered tooling and coloring of the mosaic bindings of the sixteenth century was never intended to be stowed away in our modern idea of a bookcase, for which half bound volumes answer all the purposes of display, and at this time no better allotment of choice handsome bindings can be made than distributing them on console, tables and other surfaces afforded in the mass of furniture which modern civilization finds it necessary to crowd into living rooms. Their colors alone, whether of tooled morocco, Russia calf or cloth illuminated in color and gold, have an enlivening and contrasting effect on the general tone of hardwoods. Much improvement is possible in the treatment of cloth backs, which may be made sufficiently decorative to take their place anywhere, especially by the use of some of the rich silk textiles now produced, deserving of the lustre of gilt fired metallic borders, and the more free use of the French style of impressing designs with enamelled colors, combined with gold. In short, books may be made a much more important element in the decoration of our homes than is at present the case.

FOR transparent painting on ground glass, which glass is now being put to account for friezes, door panels, recesses in sideboards and bookcases, entablatures of cabinets, over doors and even on ceilings, the colors used are to be diluted with varnish and turpentine. Ordinary tube colors are principally employed; otherwise dry colors are mixed with pale oil copal varnish; or the two may be combined: Camel hair, flat and round pencils, fitches a small badger with straight edges, sponges and a chamois leather, are among the requisites. The design is painted on the ground side of the glass. For the same purpose, and where simple ornament is sought, ground glass sheets may be used, on which the ornamental figures are left unground, and these may be gilded or silvered. A plain line of

clear glass round such figures will have a beautiful effect and heighten the lustre of the metal. The ground portion of the glass may be silvered or gilded, which will have the appearance of matt in contrast to the burnished surface of the gilded figure ornaments.

A MODE of ornamenting plain glass, applicable to the same purposes as above, is to paint the decorative design on silk or linen, and as soon as the surface has been varnished, pressing it downwards on the glass, after which the back of the linen or silk is gently rubbed, so as to exclude air bubbles. Before using either of these textiles they must be stretched on a frame, and, if water colors are used, sized with isinglass, but no sizing is required with oil colors. The gloss of the glass will less interfere with the effect if a judicious selection of colors be made, preference being given to those which are subdued. Such paintings, well executed, appear to advantage in the shaded recesses of mantels and cabinets.

VERY beautiful work may be done on smooth varnished surfaces, whether of wood or glass, in the way of gilded designs, by a process which imparts to gold a brightness which no oil gilding can equal. The varnish used is to be free from nits or undissolved gum, and applied as smoothly as possible. Upon this the gold is laid, using isinglass size, polishing it with cotton wool, and then giving a coat of finishing size. The design is then pounced and traced on the gold in the usual manner, and the ornament painted in with Brunswick black or Canada balsam; when this is dry, the gold which is left uncovered by the design is washed off, and then the Brunswick black is washed off with turps, when the design will appear in bright burnished gold. The article thus decorated will only require to be varnished again to secure the gold permanently. The smoother the surface of the work the brighter will be the burnish of the gold. This plan has an advantage over oil gilding, inasmuch as it has no perceptible projection above the surrounding surface.

THE art of making white and gold picture and mirror frames, screens and other articles of furniture, is worth attention. A foundation of whitening and size is necessary to produce a brilliant burnish. It is first applied to the molding, laid on very hot by means of a brush. In several subsequent coats the quantity of whitening to a given amount of size is increased till it is about the consistency of thick cream. The surface is then smoothed with pumice stone, using different shapes for rubbing beads, hollows, flats, etc. The surface is then washed with water. The thickness of the whitening on the wood should be at least one-sixteenth of an inch. After sandpapering a coat of clay



DETAIL OF MANTEL LAMBREQUIN. SEE PAGE 101.

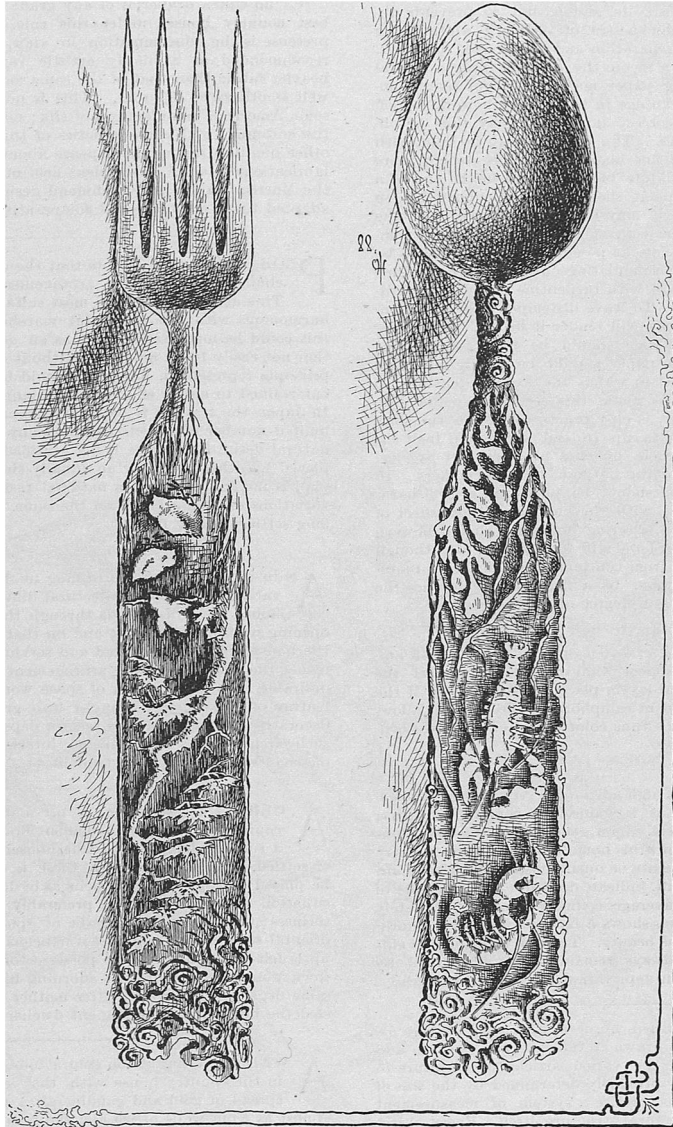
is applied to the parts to be gilt. Much taste is required to decide in the case of brackets, whatnots, console tables, chairs,

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lounches and many other articles of furniture as to what parts shall be white, matt or burnish. When all the gold is laid out and the matt finish sized, the white parts receive two or three coats of flake white and parchment size, care being taken to give a clean finish to the gilding in passing over it with a camel's hair brush. When the work is to be varnished two coats of clear size are necessary to prevent the varnish from sinking in, when the article will be ready to receive a finishing coat of enamel white varnish.

THE art of decalomania offers a substitute for the process of hand painting. It is successfully used in decorating furniture, fancy boxes, china dishes, perfumierian bottles, Parian,

it with a roller against the surface of the article to be decorated with the roller or paper knife; rub over the picture to remove all air bubbles, then with the sponge slightly wet press the paper at back till none of it remains white, roll again slightly, lift one corner carefully, and the paper will peel off, leaving the design transparent. A sponge is now slightly wetted with the detergent and any smears round the picture removed. Then carefully wash the picture with a soft sponge, taking up the moisture carefully with a piece of linen. When the design is to be transferred to cards, white paper materials, silk and other textiles, a coating of cement is to be applied to the picture and allowed to dry; then the surface around the picture is to be washed with a sponge, a second coating of the cement applied, when proceed as before directed.



CARVED SALAD FORK AND SPOON.

SECOND PRIZE DESIGN, AWARDED TO HAROLD H. BROWN, 213 PLEASANT STREET, MALDEN, MASS.

glass, china and every variety of vase, tea and coffee services and flower pots. The designs are printed in colors on paper so prepared that after they are cemented and laid on the article to be decorated, the paper can be removed by means of a wet cloth or sponge, the colored design remaining on the article. The materials required are a bottle of decalomania cement or varnish, a bottle of French detergent, a bit of fine sponge, an ivory paper knife and a roller. The colored part of the design is to be covered with a thin coating of cement; when this is tacky press

SEA-WEEDS, for the collection of which the coming months afford an opportunity to lady visitors to the seashore, may be used for numerous decorative purposes, as on the lids and sides of glass caskets, borders and even foregrounds to water color paintings and on picture and mirror frames, meanwhile, until visitors return home being kept in a scrap book. When collected they are dried between blotting paper and then washed with mastic gum dissolved in turpentine, which gives them a fresh appearance. They are affixed to the leaves of the scrap

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book, which should have a flexible back, by means of gum, and may easily be detached by damping the reverse side of the leaves. Very charming monograms and various fanciful designs may be formed with sea-weeds. They make excellent borders for the outside surface of the glass of aquariums.

STENCIL plates and their management being adjuncts of decoration, a few hints will prove serviceable. They are made of various material, from drawing and linen paper to sheets of brass, tin foil and thin sheet lead. For the general purposes of the amateur cartridge paper will ordinarily prove handy, this being coated after the design is cut with gum shellac dissolved in wood naphtha. The advantage of naphtha, as applied to paper stencils, is that in using distemper colors they do not become damp. Where turpentine is used as a vehicle for colors or for cleaning, it resists its action, and so prevents absorption. Two or three thicknesses of ordinary white lining paper saturated with this preparation and compressed together, and, in addition, coated with it on the outside, forms a capital material. The best writing paper may be used for small stencils; if firm, there is an advantage in it for smooth work, which is near the eye, as a more correct impression may thus be obtained than with thick paper. The cutting is to be done with a narrow and well tempered fine blade. For paper stencils there is nothing better than a penknife blade inserted in the end of a wooden oval handle. The point should be particularly fine, so that the lines of the pattern may be closely followed, and the movement of the blade better controlled. When in use the stencil plate should be kept as close as possible to the surface to be ornamented, and any color accumulating on it from time to time should be carefully washed off with turpentine or water, according as it is oil or distemper. To leave distemper color on a stencil paper plate when put away will render it brittle. In cutting out stencils a steel straight-edge should be used for straight lines. In cutting curves, the paper should be gently moved in the opposite direction to that in which the knife is cutting, so pushing the paper against the blade, this securing greater precision. This course, however, is only practicable when the stencil is of moderate size. Circles up to one and a half inch circumference and small half circle punches are best cut by steel punches, which are made for the purpose by tool makers. In using the punches the stencil should be placed on a level hardwood board, but in cutting with the knife a polished sheet of glass is the best ground. In selecting brushes it should be seen that they are not too hard and stiff for working, for although on account of the vibration from continual dabbing it is requisite that a stencil brush should be a firm mass of bristles the extremity should have a certain degree of softness.

PAINTED designs may be executed on paper or linen in anti-line colors that will appear semi-transparent against the light, even with several layers placed on each other, if the paper or linen is first dipped in camphor and alcohol and allowed to dry. Ornamental forms thus colored and cut out, are brilliant adornments for windows.

TO deal successfully with a high advantage requires knowledge, for which such credit as is gained in contending with a disadvantage is withheld. As a general fact the conditions for success in creating a beautiful home are perfect in country localities. The primary elements of unencumbered space, of air, and of uninterrupted sunlight, indicate domestic arrangements of ideal character. That the average country house unfortunately represents a different scheme, shows a natural difficulty regarding the simplest principles of beauty. The rich fundamental aids afforded by nature to art always remain to be discovered by those who are experienced in deprivation of such advantages.

FOR many interiors furnished by decorators who are also architects, a plan is first drawn to indicate the position and relative dimensions of the varied articles of furniture in each case. With the scale primarily determined by the size of the room in consideration, as precise a system of measurement is followed as in the architectural structure itself. Every object to be introduced is foreshadowed in the plan in studied proportion and place. This doctrine of decorative predestination is gradually developed under Bostonese influence. It governs an increasing proportion of the plans for adorning the homes of New York and surrounding localities.

IN rich and elaborate character the scenery in the representation of Nadjy, the Hungarian operetta performed at the Casino, is beyond comparison with anything of the kind hitherto produced. An important auxiliary of success is provided with such designs for which Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Marston are jointly credited. From the first scene, representing the ex-

terior of the Governor-General's palace in Hungary on the banks of the Danube, the suitably quaint and heavy style is well developed. In the second scene is shown the grand salon of the same palace, with a view through elaborate arched openings of distant scenery under an illumination of extraordinary effect. The peculiar columns and caryatides, and the richly carved entablatures picked in with deep indigos, maroons and gold, are in the best style of this variety of decoration. A street of Pesth forms the third scene, with picturesque elements, carefully studied from representations of art. In harmony with the literary conception, a sober, rich style of coloring is carried through the production.

ONE of the strictest theories of country house furnishing excludes all fabrics like brocatelle, satin, damask and plush; no silken draperies of any grade are found in the very best country houses under this rule. A solid feeling without pretense is the consummation in view. One of the materials recommended as a highly artistic variety is challie—a much heavier fabric than that of the same name used for dresses, as well as otherwise different. This is not less expensive than are some American manufactures of silk; next in range of cost comes the cretonne; with some varieties of this the colors, designs and other qualities render the expense about equal to that of cheap fabrications in silk. A sufficient field of choice is found between the Morris, Wardle and Richmond designs, the latter being best adapted to an elaborate and comparatively pretentious style.

PROBABLY no one doubts that the Japanese idea of frequent change in decorative arrangements is an excellent one. This also might appear most suitable to the country house harmonious with the changeful marches of nature. Whether this could be made satisfactory as an adopted system is a question not easily to be answered without experiment. The general principle represented, however, should be everywhere sufficiently entertained to aid in shunning the danger of decorative excess. In Japan the traveler is pleasantly impressed in finding only a limited number of objects adorning any house at one time, the natural desire for change being gratified by seeing these soon replaced by others forming an equally simple arrangement. The plan is not difficult with a national taste which leads to infinite variations of design based on the same fundamental ideas or on long settled artistic habit.

AS in other cases the furnishing of the country house will be varied to follow architectural differences. In the seaside house the hall extends through the centre of the building opening on the water front and on that facing the lawn. For the house differently situated and serving as the residence of the owner the year round this arrangement would generally be undesirable. An interruption of space would be indicated with the feature of the staircase brought into greater prominence. The decorative character of this section depends rightly of course on such circumstances of dimension interior outlines and outdoor passage, whether single or twofold.

ACERTAIN distinction is necessarily made between the country house as a permanent home and that used only as a summer habitation. The household gods in one case are of settled, even character; on these a comforting reliance may be placed during blizzard epochs as in dog-day airs. In the other situation arrangements have preferably an appearance of transitoriness; the furnishings may be of splendid order, as of some oriental sovereign in camp; nevertheless a suggestion of breaking up is felt throughout. The possessor of a fine establishment in town would hardly think of adorning his summer house with the same degree of richness. After neither of these should be modeled the home of the permanent dweller in the country.

A WALL covering of too cold a tone is equally to be avoided in the country house with that characterized by a great spread of gold and gaudiness. A peculiarly chilling effect, almost as from walls of ice and snow, is sometimes produced in an out of town house with ashy or whitish drabs predominant in the hangings. For rooms used largely throughout the year a coloring of some warmth is generally most satisfactory, united with a design of conventional order. A wall paper figured with naturalistic designs of flowers, such as may very gracefully decorate a chamber in town, is likely to prove a poor form of adornment for a room with the flowering of nature to be viewed from the window, as a counterfeit, however fine of itself, fails to captivate the eye when side by side with the real object which it imitates. The walls may as safely omit flowers in summer as iciness of tone in winter. A good selection may be made from oriental designs, varied traceries, light forms of arabesques, or figurings in Byzantine character.